



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

May 4, 2000

H.R. 826 **National Weather Service Flexible Work Scheduling Act**

As introduced on February 24, 1999

SUMMARY

H.R. 826 would amend title 5 of the United States Code, Government Organization and Employees, by eliminating the hourly overtime pay rate ceiling and the biweekly pay cap for certain employees of the National Weather Service that are paid under the General Schedule (GS) for federal employees. The act would also limit Sunday premium pay to hours actually worked.

Under current law, the maximum hourly rate of overtime pay for federal employees who are exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act is 1.5 times the minimum hourly rate of basic pay at the GS-10 level (including locality and other adjustments) with a ceiling imposed on total biweekly pay. H.R. 826 would eliminate the overtime rate ceiling for National Weather Service employees in nonmanagerial positions at level GS-14 or below whose duties are essential to the immediate daily operation of the forecast and warning responsibilities of the National Weather Service. Under this act, those employees would be paid 1.5 times their hourly rate of basic pay for overtime without a ceiling on the total amount of compensation that they may receive.

Current law also allows federal employees who work less than 8 hours on a Sunday but who are not working overtime to be paid for the full 8-hour period at the rate of basic pay plus a 25-percent premium. H.R. 826 would limit compensation for non-overtime hours worked on Sunday to 1.25 times the rate of basic pay applies only to the actual hours worked.

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 826 would cost \$1 million in 2001 and \$6 million over the 2001-2005 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. H.R. 826 would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. The bill contains no intergovernmental or private sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs to state, local, or tribal governments.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 826 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation would fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars				
	2001 ^a	2002	2003	2004	2005
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
Estimated Authorization Level	1	1	1	1	1
Estimated Outlays	1	1	1	1	1
a. H.R. 826 states: "the amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to service performed on or after the first day of the first applicable pay period." CBO assumes that H.R. 826 would take effect on October 1, 2000.					

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For the purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that the legislation will be enacted in the last quarter of fiscal year 2000, and that the necessary amounts for implementing it will be appropriated for each year. CBO also assumes that there will be no significant change in the number of employees in each grade level. Under H.R. 826, the increases in pay for affected National Weather Service employees would take effect at the start of the first pay period that begins 30 days after the bill's enactment. Thus, CBO assumes that such pay increases would begin in October 2000.

At this time, CBO cannot estimate the effect of eliminating the ceiling on total biweekly pay or of limiting Sunday premium pay to actual hours worked because the relevant data are not available. The net effect of these two provisions is likely to be less than \$500,000 per year.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS: None.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

H.R. 826 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

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